

On *Sat.* March 14th 1827
 By *W. L. Mc.*

in

Repatitis

by

Mordecai Lawrence Junr

of

Pennsylvania.

December 2nd 1826.

Hepatitis.

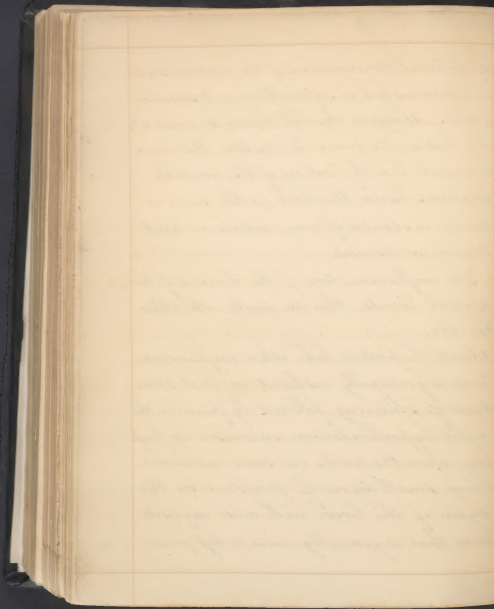
The liver is the largest viscus of the abdomen. it is situated under the diaphragm in the right Hypochondrium, extending through the upper portion of the epigastric region into the left Hypochondrium. When in a healthy condition, it is of a reddish brown colour. The bile, or fluid secreted by the liver, passes through the hepatic duct into the duodenum. Healthy bile is a natural stimulus to the intestines, it increases their peristaltic motion, and it is supposed to produce a chemical effect upon the alimentary mixtures.

With regard to the quantity of bile that is secreted by the liver in twenty-four hours, there has been much dispute among Physiologists. It is conjectured, in ordinary states of health, to be about six ounces.

Functional derangement of the liver consists in a diminished or superabundant secretion of bile. Whenever the bile becomes vitiated, it has a tendency to destroy the regular and healthy action of the animal economy. Hence the liver is the seat, in many instances of very extensive and dangerous diseases.

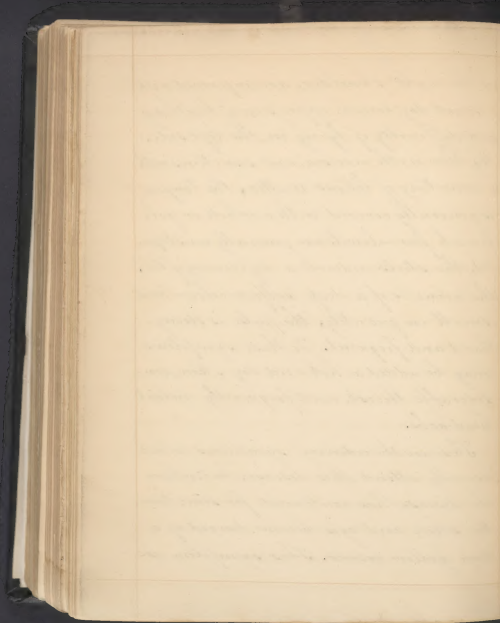
The inflammation of the liver is of two different kinds, the one acute, the other chronic.

Acute Hepatitis like other inflammations, is generally ushered in with some degree of shivering, followed by pain in the right hypochondrium, increased by pressing upon the part: in some instances, a very small degree of pressure on the region of the liver, will cause exquisite pains there is generally more or less pain



in the right shoulder, accompanied with a short dry cough, oppression of breathing and difficulty of lying on the left side, together with nausea, and sometimes with a vomiting of bilious matter, the tongue is generally covered with a white or yellowish fur—bowels are generally constipated, the stools indicate a deficiency of bile, the urine is of a deep saffron colour, and small in quantity, the pulse is strong, hard and frequent. To these symptoms may be added a hot and dry skin, considerable thirst, and frequently violent head-ache.

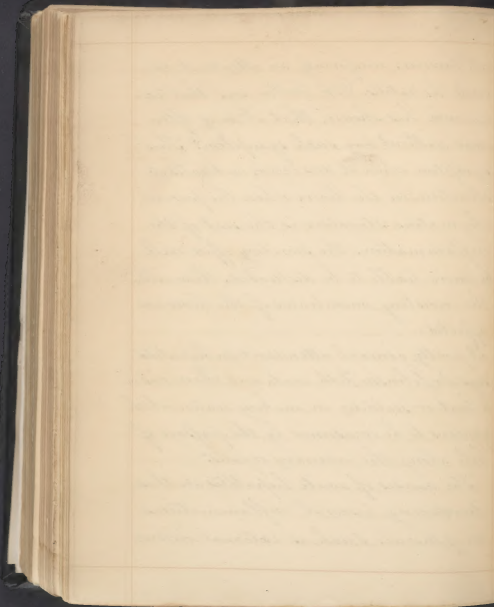
These are the ordinary symptoms which usually attend this disease; but, when the disease has continued for some time, the skin and eyes become tinged of a deep yellow colour. This symptom is



not, however, uniformly an attendant on acute Hepatitis. Dr Gallen says, that experience has shown, that it may often occur without any such symptom. This symptom when it does occur, indicates obstruction in the liver, when the parenchymatous structure is the seat of the inflammation, the secretory office will be more liable to be disturbed, than when the investing membranes of the liver are affected.

A pretty general attendant on Hepatitis says Dr Johnson both acute and chronic is a heat or scalding in making water, which appears to be occasioned by the passage of bile along the urinary organs."

The causes of acute Hepatitis are those producing visceral inflammations in general. Such as external violence



from cutaneous and blurs. This disease may also be
occasioned by violent exercise, intense summer
heats and heat bathing. A very frequent cause
of migraines is the intemperate use of spiritous
liquors. It also may be induced by going to
severe cold seasons, or in cold countries.
In most women migraines are connected with
the men, is the menstruation and the child
bearing period it ever returns to a great ex-
tent. In many instances, however, it is
observed to be retained in the placenta and
it may induce "temperatures" in a woman
running beyond the natural standard the
natural and the various secretions. Migraines
are liable to various kind of remedies are car-
ried on, and sometimes there were early signs
before, or in the indication of acids. The con-
sequence of which is a low nervous debility
to the free nervous system, and a great loss of





from pneumonia. From inflammation of the stomach, hepatitis may be distinguished by the absence of that gastric irritability and sensibility, which renders gastric inflammation so distressing a complaint. The less prostration of strength, will also assist us, in hepatitis, to distinguish it from gastritis.

The inflammation of the liver, may terminate in different ways, by resolution, suppuration or gangrene. This last termination, however, is of rare occurrence. The disease sometimes also terminates in scirrhus, in which the liver becomes swelled and hard. This termination, however, is a more frequent result of chronic hepatitis.

When hepatitis terminates by resolution, it is often attended with evacuations of different kinds. A hæmorrhage sometimes from the nose, and sometimes from the hæmorrhoidal



vessels, gives a solution to the disease, and
occurs a bilious diarrhoea, or it is sometimes
carried off by an evacuation of urine, deposit-
ing a copious sediment.

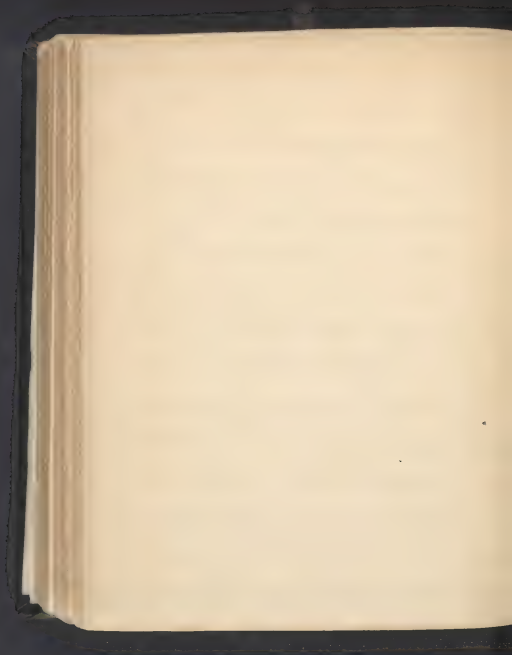
When the disease terminates in scorbutum,
the inflammatory symptoms gradually subside,
and a new train develops themselves; the
symptoms are, remission of pain, or a dis-
tinct pain of a burning or throbbing nature,
rigors accompanying an intermitting course,
and sometimes in the advanced stage of the
disease, inattention may be observed.
The stools during it are reduced in
quantity, the bowels are very irregular, gen-
erally in a dysenteric state.

Communications are sometimes formed, between the
abscess and the intestines, or between the abscess
and biliary ducts, a communication is estab-
lished, through which the pus is discharged



the intestines and is discharged by stool. & the
 above point towards the stomach. There will be
 great gastric irritability, and when the mat-
 ter weighs into that cavity, vomiting, but
 stool comes the same. In some instances
 an admission as formed between the intestines
 and duodenum, are liberated, & comes dis-
 charged, & when the matter is dis-
 charged into the chest, or ventricle, or even
 the stomach, is a most dangerous case, & the
 matter to be discharged is through the vo-
 luntary muscles.

In dissection of these men the intestines
 the liver is often found much enlarged
 and to the lungs, its colour is more or a
 dark, more than what is natural, and its
 membranes are more or less inflamed by inflam-
 mation. Dissections likewise show that adhe-
 sions to the veins, & arteries, are often taken



have. Great tubercles, as well as numerous cysts
 lacrimated hydatids, are sometimes found in it,
 and great abscesses, containing a considerable quan-
 tity of pus, are often found in its substance.

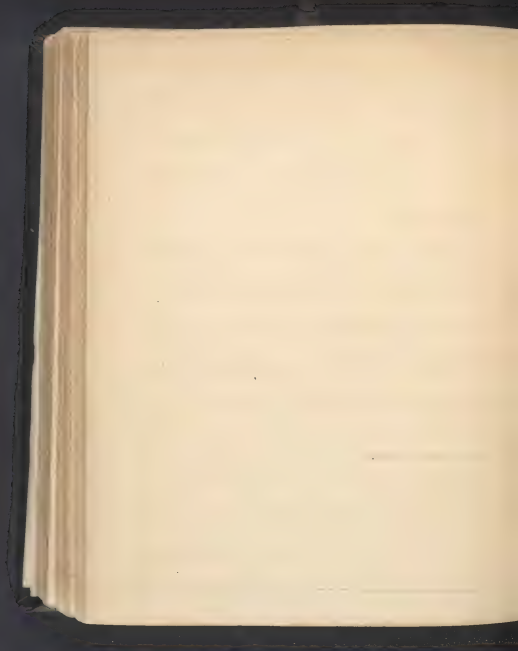
Treatment.

From the nature of the disease, blood letting
 is evidently the appropriate remedy. Intense
 excitement should be induced or coaxed into
 action. The quantity taken away should be in-
 creased, till recovery of the men, or regulated
 by the effect produced. As a general rule it
 is recommended to take away from twenty to
 thirty ounces of blood, and to repeat the op-
 eration in the inflammatory action a week or
 to be repeated. The medicine is blood let-
 ting at the commencement of acute inflammation,
 and is similar to great inflammation, and
 is in great danger of suppuration ensuing,
 which, when once established, seldom recedes.



we must consider indeed: "Topical" venesection
by means of cups or leeches, applied to the region
of the liver will be likely to have a good effect.
After full bleedings both general and topical
a large blister should be applied over the
affected part.

Cathartics are of much service, and some
of their peculiar duration on the liver, are
more valuable in this disease than others.
Purgatives, besides the power of
exciting the functions of the liver, and in-
ducing a more catarrhal condition, hence their
superiority over saline purges which operate
merely on the surface of the mucous coat
of the intestines. Calomel is usually employed.
It may be given in doses of ten or fifteen minims.
This is the ordinary dose when administered
as a cathartic. Dr. J. C. Garman's expe-
rience of this medicine, remarks that



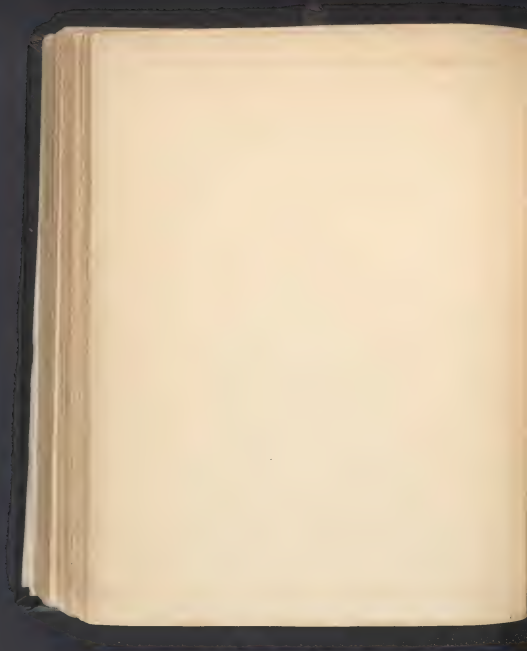
we commit a mistake in giving too small a quantity of it. Employed in its action is the coöperation of the stomach and intestines is not so apt to be spoiled by vomiting its absorptive operation being more secure and complete. It is sometimes combined with the compound extract of colocynthis, followed byenna and salts, so as completely to clear the intestinal canal. When the surface of the body remains constricted, with a view to promoting a mild diarrhoea, small doses of antimonial powder may be administered in combination with calomel.

The diet in acute febrile states should consist of the most innocuous ^{articles}, even as soon forms animal food is to be strictly withheld from the patient. Thirst may be assuaged by cooling acidulous drinks, and cool air should be admitted into the apartment.



At the commencement of this disease, the an-
terolateral chain is to be pursued, until, as
this mode of treatment the inflammatory
phenomena are sufficiently reduced, measures
are usually resorted to, for the purpose of
remission, the disease is a gentle agitation.
Dr. Ferrius recommends, that, to
be successful in curing it by gradually increasing
the use of exercise.

When we are to remove restriction of this
disease, and its irritation becomes established,
which is not a very uncommon termina-
tion of acute scurvy in warm climates,
where the disease is of frequent occurrence,
we should, as soon as the above men-
tioned symptoms, even it does not have it to be
cured, it is necessary of the efforts of na-
ture, for which reason states, that the joints
were much in the most extreme waiting



for the spontaneous opening of the abscess.
 but experience shows, that the patients
 chance of getting well is proportionally in-
 creased by an early evacuation of the matter.
 When the matter is discharged it soon un-
 dergoes an alteration both in colour and
 consistence. Professor Wilson relates a case
 where, a large quantity of pus, having
 matter was discharged, was in a few days
 become so changed in colour as to resemble
 coffee grounds. After the matter is dis-
 charged, the patient should be kept
 at bed, and on a nutritious diet.



Chronic Hepatitis

This disease may have an existence as a sequel of ill cured acute Hepatitis, or it may be caused by an intemperate use of ardent spirits or other causes, producing the acute species.

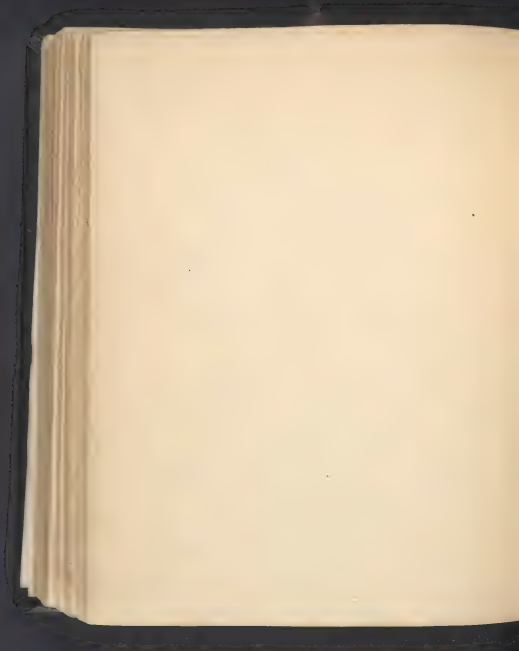
"It seems probable" says Dr. Cullen "that the acute Hepatitis is always an affection of the external membrane of the liver, and that the parenchymatic is of the chronic kind."

Chronic Hepatitis is gradual in its approach, and is usually accompanied with a sallow complexion; the stomach is disordered; bowels constipated; stools clay coloured; the patient is subject to an obtuse pain in the right hypochondrium, as in the acute species the pain is often extended up to the right scapula, or to the top



of the right shoulder. the patient is also unable to lie easy on the left side—pulse is increased in frequency, and fuller than natural, sometimes it is hard and corded, a sense of weight is felt in the region of the liver. To these symptoms may be added difficulty of breathing, unpleasant sense of flatulence and distention of the stomach; acidity and pains in the stomach, headache or giddiness, despondency of mind, and a gradual diminution of strength.

These symptoms in many cases of chronic inflammation of the liver, unfortunately, are so slightly marked, that they will not indicate to the patient, the dangerous disease under which he is labouring. Even hepatic abscesses have been discovered on dissection, which had given no inconvenience during life, nor were even suspected to exist though such abscesses



must have been the consequence of previous
and progressive inflammation. A careful
examination of the right Hypochondriac
region, will often enable us to ascertain
the existence of the disease. The liver in
most cases may be felt to be enlarged, with
some degree of hardness, and also tenderness
when pressure is made upon the organ.
In conducting an examination, the patient
should be placed in a horizontal position.
The feet should be drawn up, so as to re-
lax the muscles of the vertical region, and
by directing them to take a deep inspiration,
the diaphragm will descend and the liver
is carried downwards.

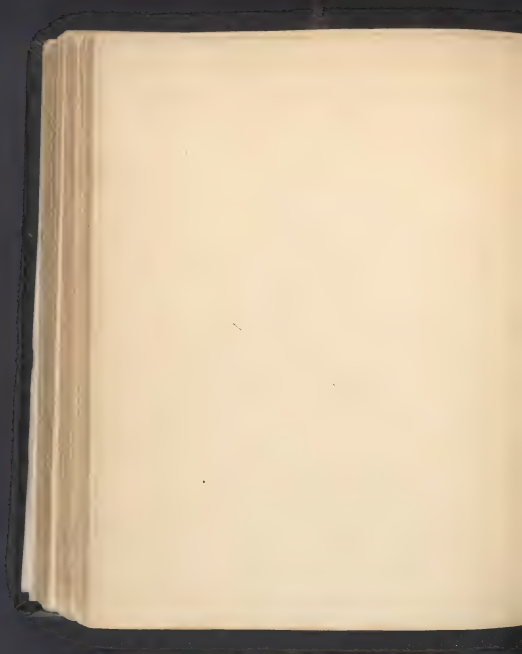
In the treatment of chronic inflammation
of the liver, moderate bleedings may be pro-
posed advantageously, both general and topi-
cal; the latter ought to be confined to the



offending contents by purgative medicines
A blister may be applied to the region of
the liver, also a seton is very useful.

Dr. Moore mentioned, at the hospital, that
he found the application of a seton to
the region of the liver, in chronic Hepa-
titis, to be more effective in relieving
the pain and uneasy sensations, than any
other remedy he had used.

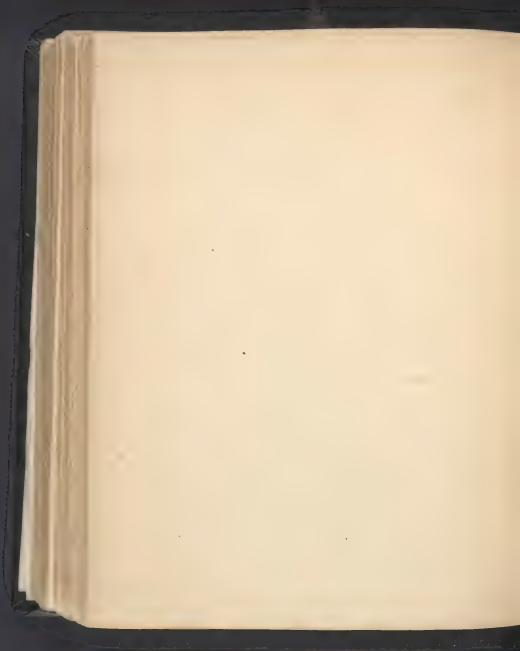
The Sassafras has acquired some reputation
in the treatment of chronic Hepatitis. Dr.
Pemberton says, that he has seen great ad-
vantage result from using the extract in chro-
nic inflammation and incipient scirrhus
of the liver. The dose of the extract is about
a scruple, which may be given twice a day.
The Sassafras may also be given in deco-
ction, made by boiling an ounce of the dried
root, in a pint of water, to half a pint.



adding to the strained liquor, a drachm of the cream of tartar. This is the form in which it is usually employed. it may be given in the dose of a wine glass full, three times a day.

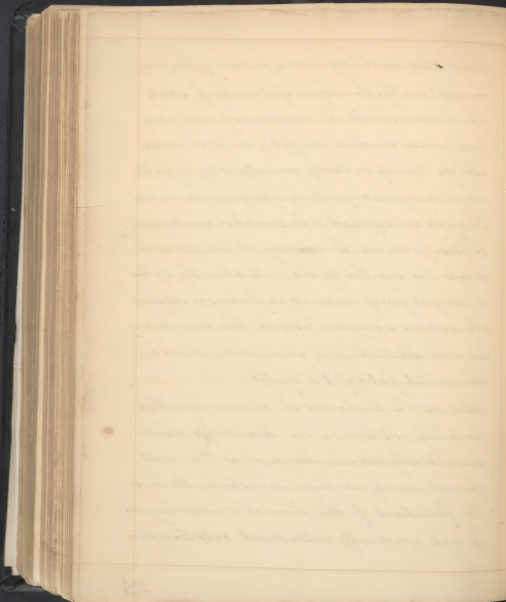
Gum ammoniac is a deobstruent, which has been given in chronic hepatitis, it was one of the remedies used by the late Dr. Wistar in hepatic obstructions. but at present it appears to be very little employed under such circumstances. It is given in the dose of ten or fifteen grains.

As a remedy in chronic inflammation of the liver, the nitromuriatic acid has been recommended. It is applied externally in the shape of a bath. The proportion of the acids employed for the formation of the bath, are equal parts of each, of which an ounce is added to a gallon of warm water, increased or



diminished according to the nature of the case, and especially, the degree of delicacy of skin. The mixture should be warmed, and used as a pediluvium in which the feet should be continued for twenty or thirty minutes every night: or it may be applied by sponging the surface. Its effects are supposed to be somewhat analogous to those produced by mercury. It sometimes increases the secretion of bile, and when the system is brought fairly under its influence, it occasionally induces a coppery taste in the mouth, and an increased discharge of saliva, but without the mercurial fætor of the breath.

But in the treatment of chronic Hepatitis our chief reliance is on mercury, when judiciously administered, it is the most efficient remedy we have, in restoring the healthy functions of the liver: it should be gently and gradually introduced into the system.



till a slight salivation is effected. The relief, indeed, (says Dr. Johnson) experienced in, most cases of chronic Hepatitis, the moment that mercury affects the mouth is truly surprising. The removal of all uneasy sensations from the side, the clearing up of the skin and countenance, the restoration of the natural evacuations, and in short, the removal of every complaint but debility, vince the powers of this remedy.

In some cases, it may, perhaps, be unnecessary to use mercury with a view of inducing salivation, after all other remedies have failed.

An alterative Effect of the blue pill, in some instances, may cure the disease, but when this fails, the system should be put under a slight mercurial impression.

